

We Start With...

A two minute period of silence - a moment of peace.

From the ‘Chair’

At our February meeting we discussed some of the most vexed issues of our time. Robots, artificial intelligence, and other technologies are reducing the numbers of jobs for unskilled and semiskilled workers, and for professionals too (anything that can be learned about how you do the job by observation can be taken over by technology). The implications of the rapidly reducing number of jobs (and thus income) lead to consideration of the possibility of a Universal Basic Income, and we explored the nature and benefits of a UBI to a community (just a little).

Gretchen

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Next Meeting

Marion Christie will introduce a 24 minute video, a TED talk by Dan Dennett entitled ‘Let’s teach religion – all religion – in schools’, and then lead a discussion on the many points of interest raised by the video. If you wish, you can watch the video beforehand, at

www.ted.com/talks/dan_dennett_s_response_to_rick_warren

Robots

The problem with a lot of this new technology is the rate of change – Alvin Toffler called it “Future Shock”. I confess to having been able to keep up with most of it so far, although I don’t use the social media ‘FaceBook’ or ‘Twitter’ at all.

British comedian Peter Kay says his grandma calls it “FaceTube” and when the two of them went into MacDonal’d’s to get food she asked him to get her some “Wi-Fi” as they were free (Free “Wi-Fi”). His grandma gives him a lot of inspiration for his jokes (you can find him on YouTube and have a really good laugh).

I look forward to a driverless electric car as I get older. I like the thought of being able to get into the car and tell it to go to “Sea of Faith meeting” and then sit back until I get there. When all is over I will say “Home” and afterwards plug it in like an electric toothbrush. That may enable people to stay in their own home for longer (as I think many folk make the move to a retirement village shortly after the driving licence goes).

Religion in Schools

Marion Christie

Thursday, 23rd MARCH

St John’s Church Hall,
Cnr Wright Street
& Highgate

Tea and Coffee
will be available from 5.30pm

The programme will start at
6.00pm

Contribution - \$5

My new computer came with Windows 10. I was happy with Windows 7, and my old computer would link up to Bruce's data projector – my new one has a fancy link called HDMI (that's High Definition Multi-media Interface just in case you need to know). Anyhow, it won't talk to Bruce's projector so we must try to find a different one. I think the Freemasons can help.

Here is my point – we need to keep up to date with all the changes and developments. Not easy. That's a good reason for U3A courses but also for helping each other. Sometimes a helping hand from someone just a bit more skilled than yourself is all that's needed to help you take that next step and be able to use the new 'phone, video, TV or whatever. Young ones seem to do things so easily – but when I was their age I stripped a car apart, gearbox, clutch, big end overhaul the lot. Many of today's youngsters can't do that. I know a lot of you make wonderful baking and cooking – I'm not much good at that and I'll bet a lot of youngsters are not either. We all have skills to share – we are all still very good at something and when we get together and pool our skills, we can keep up with today's world.

Feeding the 5000

I heard an interesting take on the story of the loaves and fishes. The speaker said that at the meeting Jesus took the food that he had and shared it around. That inspired all the others in the crowd to do the same (which they may well not have done without his inspiration and example) and there was food for all.

Helping each other, sharing what we have seems to me to be in that mold.

Luther and the Reformation

It is 500 years since Luther (the monk) made his stand against the Catholic Church. He objected to priests selling indulgences. He wanted people to be able to read the bible in their own language – German – so he made a translation from the Latin. Did he actually nail his 95 theses to the church door at Wittenberg? One programme I have listened to says that the story is apocryphal, however I'm looking forward to this series of lectures at our generous University to find out more.

I think it is high time we had another Reformation and sorted some of the awful things out – what would you put on the list if you were to write 95 theses? You don't need to get as far as 95 – but maybe you'll have more than that.

Pen and paper time now.

Refugees

I spotted this in a Newsletter from Opoho Church which a good friend loaned me

They have no need of our help
So do not tell me
These haggard faces could belong to you or me
Should life have dealt a different hand
We need to see them for who they really are
Chancers and scroungers
Layabouts and loungers
With bombs up their sleeves
Cut-throats and thieves
They are not
Welcome here
We should make them
Go back to where they came from
They cannot
Share our food
Share our homes
Share our countries
Instead let us
Build a wall to keep them out
It is not okay to say
These are people just like us
A place should only belong to those who are
born there
Do not be so stupid as to think that
The world can be looked at another way

(Now read from bottom to top)

Brian Bilston

Read more at <https://brianbilston.com/>

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